Right Re-entred,

AND THE

REASONS

THEREOF

RENDERED:

IN

The plain, yet modeſt Apology of *Zach. Crofton* Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Buttolphs Aldgate LONDON.*

For his Return to the exerciſe of his Miniſtry in his own Church, at the uſual hours of publick Worſhip on the Lords Daies Afternoon.

In the which hee hath been for a ſeaſon obſtructed by Mr. *John Sympſon.*

Luke 4.16 As his cuſtome was, hee went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath day, and ſtood up to read.

Inauditum ſi damnent, præter invidiam iniquitatis, etiam ſuſpitionem merebuntur alicujus conſcientiæ, nolentes audire, quod auditum damnare non poſſunt. Tertul. Apolog.

Entred according to Order.

LONDON,

Printed for *James Nuthall*, and are to bee ſold at his houſe in the *Minories* next door to the *Dolphin*, and likewiſe at Book-ſellers ſhops. 1657.

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To the Reader.

Courteous Reader,

THou mayeſt well wonder that I cannot Reaſſume my Right without an Apology, whilſt I am thereunto reſtored, by the preſent ſettlement of the Commonwealth in a way of Law and Juſtice, and encouraged, by the example of a Reverend Congregational Brother my very next neighbour, repoſſeſſing the command of his Church, againſt the election of the people, and concurrence of his own conſent to a ſober and ſtable man: But much more mayeſt thou wonder, my Apology is made thus publick; and if thus thou doeſt, Concerning the firſt, all that I have to ſay is, Bewail the evil of the times, which make real, or the trembling ſpirits of men which imagine the truth of the Proverb, Some men may better ſteal a horſe, than others look over the hedge, *and layeth a neceſſity on ſome men, to enjoy their own juſt priviledge, with a by your leave.*

To the ſecond, I deſire thee to conſider, I have to do with clamorous perſons, who getting the firſt word, hold on, and make male interpretations of the beſt actions; which to prevent, I thought good to give this account to the world, that when they ſpeak to the diſturbance of my friends, they may have in readineſs ſomething to anſwer.

Moreover, Mine enemies (I know) are very ready to represent my just action to bee a contempt of supreme power, and do proudly boast of their access to, and acceptance in all things with the Lord Protector, and his Councell; as if the Swords point were the onely Key to open, not onely a passage to, but the pleasure of his Highness; and have often openly declared, that I shall never have audience or acceptance.

Now although I am convinced, that these are brags groundless, inconsistent to his Highness Justice and Wisdome, and greatly scandalous to his Government: And this action is a business much below the Cognizance of such who are imployed in the publick affairs of the Commonwealth; yet (if they shall please to stoop so low as to inquire into this act) that by these papers I may possibly press into their presence, and give some short account of the reasons enforcing my conscience thereunto, desire the defence of my just priviledge, or to bee legally and judicially deprived of it: I have strained modesty, to present to thee, these ensuing Lines, desiring thee to read without passion, or prejudice; making the case thine own, then condemn if thou canst, him, who hath committed his cause to God, and makes his appeal to Justice: And is

Thine in the Work
of the Lord,

ZACH. CROFTON.

Right

Right re-entred,

AND

The Reasons thereof rendred:

In a brief Apology of *Zachary Crofton*, Minister at *Buttolphs Aldgate London*, for his return to his own Church on Lords Days in the after-noon, there to doe his duty to the people committed to his Charge.

THE Anabaptistical, and prophane Anti-ministerial spirit in the Parish of *Buttolphs Aldgate* having risen up against me, and my Ministery with much rage and fury, and pursued me with many Noyses and Clamours to the Scandalizing of my Person, and Ministry among the Vulgar, did by importunity, and *false surmises* prejudice the *Lord Protector* against me, and obtained an Order, rendring Master *John Sympson* capable of preaching his Lecture at *Aldgate* as formerly; by vertue of which with loud Clamours, and high Threats, on *Feb.* 14. 1656. being the Lords Day, he invaded my Church, at the season of my discharge of duty, and hath ever since to the great affliction of my self, and people, then and there exercised, I abiding it with patience, waiting an opportunity to cast off this yoke, and to re-enter, and enjoy my former liberty; the which I conceive God hath now put into my hands, and I am in conscience constrained to close with it, for these ensuing Reasons.

Reaſ. 1. That I may *duly reſtore thoſe parts of Gods Worſhip into the publique Aſſembly (which by his being in my Church are interrupted)* viz. The *Reading of the Scriptures*, which wholly ceaſeth; my mornings Catechizing, having referred that Exerciſe to the after-noon: and the *Baptizing of the Infants of beleeving Parents, with the ſuffrages and ſupplications of the Church*, and to the publique edification of the Aſſembly, the which having been (by cuſtome and conveniency) confined to that ſeaſon of the day, though I have endeavoured, yet I cannot bring it into the Mornings Adminiſtration: and I doubt not but every Chriſtian wil grant, that although *Sobriety* will indulge communion with men of different perſwaſions, yet true zeal muſt needs conteſt for the free, publique, and uninterrupted exerciſe of all things, of which the Conſcience is convinced, they are parts of Gods publique Worſhip.

Reaſ. 2. That I may *deliver the Souls of my people from the danger of Apoſtaſie, and back-ſliding*, to which they are obnoxious, whilſt ſome on one, and ſome on another imagined Ground and Reaſon, will be ſubjected to the teachings of him who hath renounced his Miniſtry, fomented many ſtrange and new Fancies, been openly Charged with, convicted of, and judged for errour, and which (for ought that I know) he never yet retracted; nay, and notwithſtanding his pleaded and pretended Retrogradation, if the ears of many of his Hearers did not miſtake, he in my very Pulpit, hath ſpoken to the *contempt* and vilifying of ſome of Gods Ordinances in ſpecial of Catechizing (that ancient and approved Ordinance of God) if I be not miſinformed by many; he ſaid to the people, *to learn a Catechiſme is not to worſhip God, you may as well take your Children to the Market, or Fair, and buy them Baubles, and Rattles, as Catechiſmes*; the Conclave at *Rome* cannot but commend the contempt of this, by them condemned Barre to Popery; let any judge, whether it bee conſiſtent with miniſterial zeal, to ſuffer ſuch contemptible expreſſions of an Ordinance exerciſed, and by the Lord appointed to the inſtruction of a rude and ignorant people? or in ſilence ſuffer his people to be ſubjected to ſuſpected infectious air, eſpeci-

ally

ally such as hath been so found on experience, and hath never been duly pronounced pure and sound; Doe not all know, that different sounds in the same assembly must needs distract the weak; I heartily pray, that some poor souls doe not eternally rue his rushing in upon us, to the unhinging of their spirits who began to be setled; it is no little sadning to my spirit, to think how the work of God is among us obstructed (who were in a vigorous and hopeful way of returne, to settled order under Gods Ordinances) by his intrusion. Is it a just and sufficient Reason to exclude Mr. *Johnson* (elected by the people according to a long custome and prescription, and consented to by the incumbent) out of *Stepney*, that he or his friends (sometime preaching for him) seeme to preach against Mr. *Greenhils* way of Church order; and will it not hold against Mr. *Sympson* for Mr. *Croston*? doth not the Liberty of Conscience provide for Mr. *Crostons* way of Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline, in his owne Church, as well as Mr. *Sympsons* in his meeting-place? Let him then in his owne place publish his Doctrines, and teach his followers.

Scinditur incertum studia contraria vulgus.

Reas. 3. That I may *defend my owne interest and just priviledge*, and disowne his pretended claime and propriety; I am proper and legal Incumbent, by presentation, approbation, and admission of the Commissioners to that end appointed, and the acceptance of the people in general, and that to all intents and purposes whatsoever, to an Incumbent belonging, among which, the liberty and free use of the Church, to the administration of Gods Ordinances is not the least, and that to the exclusion of any, whosoever intruding without my consent to Lecture in the same.

This the constitution and custome of the Nation, and common enjoyment of all other legal Incumbents conferres upon me, and confirmes unto me; some Congregational men that have sometimes declaimed against Vicaridges, and the like terms, can now claime the power of commanding the Church in this very case, by this very title of being Vicar, incumbent; this therefore being my priviledge, I must needs contract on my self the guilt of wilful loss, and become a sad president to my Brethren for the

future, if I ſhould not to the uttermoſt conteſt in defence of the ſame, eſpecially when oppoſed by meere force, and invaded by fury, without any ground of right, or colour of Law; and yet endeavours are uſed, to blinde the people with falſe pretences of right and intereſt: as did Maſter *Sympſon* (on the day of his violent entry into my Church) who in the Pulpit diſclaimed all entrance by Principles of Power, and diſowned the vertue of any Paper order, ſigned with a mans hand, though his friends never pleaded any thing to me but Power, and courted my conſent with no other Rhetorick but foule words, and furious threats (to the terrour of my friends, and very great ſcandal of the Lord Protectors Government) and himſelf anſwered my declared right (when I demanded the reaſon of his invaſion of my Church) with no other anſwer, ſave a Paper order ſigned by a mans hand, no way in my opinion giving authority to ſuch an action, but wickedly uſed to ſuch an end; whilſt then he waves power, I have no reaſon to ſubject to it, but plead with him the right pretended, and in what will he bottome his Pretended right? The people that heard him make his claime, doe averre, in very falſities, an election by the Veſtrymen of the Pariſh many years after they ceaſed, and there were no ſuch in being; but I returne him to plead the truth of his pretences with the people, I have only to try the force of them; Election is all pretended, and that to an Arbitrary Lecture, no Paſtoral charge; and what doth this Election conferre without the conſent of the incumbent; nay, and this made voyd by a long diſcontinuance, and an Order from the Committee for plundered Miniſters to inhibite it; if he thinks this conferres on him any right, let him plead it at Law, I will make my defence in judgement; till then, let none of his Friends think much, that real right re-enters on what is but a meer pretence.

But it is objected, *Why did you recede from your right at firſt, had it not been better to have continued in your Poſſeſſion?*

To this I anſwer, *Yes, it had*; but however, *Receſſion* is no *Reſignation*, if by force and fury I have given back, I have

have not therefore given up my right, but may when I will come on again, and re-enter upon it.

2. I repent that act of Receſſion, and blame my ſelf for it, though I did it more to ſatisfie the deſires of my affrighted people, than any reaſon I conceived in my ſelf; his Friends pretending an Order from his Highneſs, and the Councel, made a dreadful noyſe, threatned my utter ejection, undoing to my Family, and the penalty of malignancy to my Friends, if there were any reſiſtance; they ſtopt all Petitionary paſſage to the Protector, or Councel, and threatned the moſt ſage men of the Pariſh, that if an hundred of them, though ſuch as the Deputy (a man of Gravity, Piety, and Civil quality) appeared in the Caſe, to defend my Right, and their owne Liberties, they would trip up their heels; all which, though I ever judged them inſolencies beyond Commiſſion, and greatly ſcandalous to the Lord Protectors Government, and ſuch as his wiſdome could never owne; yet they being enforced, by a thundring Captaine (of noted impudence) ſo affected the vulgar people, that many of them intreated, and importunately enforced my receſſion, fearing that in that juncture of time the Government ſeeming Arbitrary, and the Protector by falſe ſurmiſes prejudiced againſt me; I might have been ſuppreſſed by Power, and meer force might have prevented my Plea of Right; but now that the Lord Protector hath granted protection to all Miniſters agreeing in the Publique profeſſion in matters of Faith, and that in the way of their Churches, and made voyd *all Lawes, Statutes, Ordinances, and Clauſes to the contrary*; and hath conſented, and ſworne, *to Governe according to Law, and not otherwiſe*; I thought it to be an opportunity put into my hand by the Lord, to diſpel all fear, and diſ-regard the fears of my Friends, to return and re-enjoy my Right and juſt Liberty, fearing that all following effects, to the ſouls of my people, might faſten on my conſcience, with this aggravation, you were ſet at liberty, why did you not take your opportunity and enjoy it? Why ſhould the Lord Protector bear the Odium of interpoſing his Power to your juſt Priviledge, who hath reſtrained and recalled it.

4 To *declare to the world my conſcience of mine own innocency, as to all thoſe crimes*, which have been moſt falſely ſuggeſted to the Lord Protector, to his prejudice againſt mee, and loudly clamored of mee, all over the Nation, which were the recrimination, with which my demanded Right was once anſwered; and were imagined and fomented in a way extraordinary and extrajudicial, by fiat and common lyars, and by moſt poſitive and palpable perjury, faſtened on mee, meerly to defend this invaſion of my Church, and may win credence with the vulgar, who are ready to conclude, fear forceth him to ſit ſtill under the injury whilſt hee is obnoxious to criminal charges, unto the which apprehenſion I can more eaſily judge, men are inclined, when I conſider, how ready they are to argue credence to a charge faſtened by palpable poſitive perjury, and ſo proved, meerly becauſe the perjured are not brought to the Pillory, whilſt they never conſider the matter charged, is a meer foolery, and the falſe witneſs defended from the hand of juſtice, by the extraordinary extrajudicial proceſs, which gave elbow-room (as my greateſt enemies were told they would to carry their deſign) to ſwear themſelves to the loweſt place in hell, and the Law therefore cannot paſs upon them.

I having therefore long called for judgement, and offered the moſt furious of my adverſaries, to truſt my credit on the verdict of a Jury, either amicably choſen, or judicially returned, thought it to bee my duty to re-aſſume mine intereſt, and to tell mine enemies, I am ſo zealous for a pious Miniſtry, that let me but have juſt judges, judicial proceſs, and faithful witneſſes, if I bee found guilty of a ſcandalous converſation, let mee bee caſt out as unſavoury ſalt; for though I cannot bear recrimination, as the anſwer of my Right, yet I deſire not to retain forfeited priviledges, the forfeiture being regularly demanded.

But here ſome may bee ready to object, what eminent and extraordinary providence hath appeared, to evidence your innocency, as the ſcandals charged on you? have you any ſpecial reaſon for this your confidence?

To this I anſwer, what eminent or extraordinary providence do men in this caſe expect; is it the conviction and con-

confession of the false witness? what hope to enjoy it, when we consider them to be wonted to lying, and wickedness, thereby obdurated unto obstinacy, and open impudence; nay and defended in their impiety by security from punishment, their gross impiety lying without the lash of the Law, and not punishable by the Magistrate, and their persons concealed among malicious and inveterate confederates against my name and Ministry, so that a counsel can be given unto conviction, nay and incouraged to obstinacy, by (so too much to be suspected) maintenance, as to their outward condition, that before knew not how to subsist in the world, and now have no more visible means of subsistence (this excepted) than they had before: So that their conviction is not impossible, and so that I cannot but pray for; but yet I see little probability, or ground of hope; God can, and in this case must work a miracle if ever it be.

Do men expect some immediate stroak of vengeance in order to my vindication? if so, I am not insensible God can, and sometimes hath so pleaded the cause of his reproached servants: I have read the story of *Narcissus* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, and others, and observed how God did in this world punish the wicked accusers: But I know no warrant I have to expect, or ground to beleeve such immediate appearances of Gods Justice, and charity checks the very desires of it, further than it may tend to the conviction and conversion of the guilty: But whilst God hath given ordinary and common means of vindication, what reason have I, or any other to expect extraordinary? Doth not this expectation tempt the Lord, and charge folly on the expectants? in all judicial scrutiny, is not the proved falsehood of the witness the evidence of innocency in the accused? How many slanders have been silenced on no other ground but the falsehood and disagreement of the witnesses? was not the inconsistency of the witnes, mistaking in one onely punctilio (the name of the tree) in the story of *Susanna*, by all men of justice and reason, the acquittance of her from guilt; And hath not the Holy Ghost prescribed the same course in recording that character

of

of a false witness, *Prov.* 14.5. *A false witness will utter lies*: And is it not the justification of our Lord and Master, when accused by false witnesses, that their witness agreed not together? *Mark* 14.56.

And doth not nature make incredible such as are open and often liars? shall any then see, or hear a charge ridiculously circumstantiated, laid against mee on a principle of malice (the forge of falsehood) visible to very enemies, in a way extrajudicial, declining and avoyding judicial scrutiny, either amicable, or authoritative, to the shelter of slanderous suggestions, before seeming judges, that have pre-judged, and are willing to pleasure adversaries with all advantages, by witnesses that are known liars, openly proclaiming themselves to bee such, disagreeing in themselves, and one with another, not onely contradicted by others, to whom themselves make appeal, but also one by another, and also by their very selves opposing oath to oath, and declarations unto others to their oaths, and that in the substantial part of the charge, and swearing themselves to bee forsworn, as to that which is the matter of crime, and yet continue to censure mee as guilty, or suspend the sentence of mine innocency, untill God satisfie them by miraculous, and extraordinary means, let mee advise them seriously to consider, whether their want of charity hath not deprived them of reason, and their willingness to reproach mee, or my Ministry, doth not make them unjust in their expectations of vindication? For my part, I cannot but humbly adore that providence, which hath pleaded my cause so far, as to manifest the palpable perjury of confederates against mee unto their confusion, and the enforcing of their quibling fancies to interpretations beyond the sense of oaths, declared by them that sware them, and a catching at failed circumstances, as so many straws, to save themselves from the pit of perpetual reproach: And my own conscience witness, and sense of approaching judgement of Jesus Christ shall keep up my confidence under all mens censures, though men should oppress mee, and God refer my vindication to that day.

5 *To divert him from eating the bread out of mine, and my*

children

childrens mouths. This, I bleſs God, as a Miniſter, is to mee the leaſt reaſon, or inducement that can bee: I doubt not but many in this Pariſh know my contempt of their contributions, when they lie in the way of duty; yet as a man, and Maſter of a Family (that muſt not bee worſe than an Infidel) it is of ſome moment, whilſt I have a family conſiſting of a child-bearing wife, ſeven ſmall children, and two ſervants, and no means of ſubſiſtence but by my Miniſtry; I am in point of prudence and conſcience bound to preſerve the means of maintenance; providence hath cut out for mee; my means in this Pariſh is not certaine eighteen pound *per annum*, all the reſt is arbitrary, and depends by a cuſtome on benevolence quarterly collected: Now though at Mr. *Sympſons* intruſion, the cry was, Hee will preach gratis, hee is a landed man, and hath maintenance from his ſeparated Church, and would receive nothing from the Pariſh, yet his friends (on very purpoſe to ſupplant the livelihood of my ſelf and family) go from houſe to houſe to gather the contributions of the people, threatning them into contribution if backward, and that juſt at the ſeaſon my friends were gathering for mee, and the more eaſily to deceive the people, engage ſome weak men that were known to collect for mee, to do it for him, by reaſon of which ſome have already deducted from their uſual rate of contribution, rendring that reaſon, *That they muſt contribute to him alſo*, in which courſe the deſign can bee no other (ſeeing they cannot threaten or ſcandalize mee out) ſave by a double contribution, on a people poor, under many many preſſures, liable to pay an Impropriator, and unable to pay two Miniſters? to lay ſiege to my great Family, and ſtarve out my Miniſtry.

If therefore this my Re-entrance ſeem ſtrange, or precipitate to any, I am content that they conclude it is the raiſing of a ſiege, and Hunger will break through a ſtone wall.

Laſtly, *To deliver my ſelf and people from trouble and charge*, I muſt by the duty of my place, and method of my Mi-

nistry preach twice on the Lords day to my people, Doctrinals in the morning, and practicals in the afternoon; Although by Gods providence (which I thankfully adore) I enjoy a place something convenient, by the choice of the people, and consent of the Incumbent, and to a considerable augmentation to my outward means, without the least act of intrusion, yet the walk in a wet day hath its trouble, and will in Winter bee more wearisome to my self and people, and in it wee are but tenants at will, and sue for seats and season at the courtesie of our friends (whose kindness wee have cause and are ready thankfully to acknowledge) but are not bound to use, whilst of right wee have a place at our own command.

Moreover such is the rudeness of such as frequent his Ministry, that the very day hee entred my Church, they broke in peeces the Communion-table, and shortly after they tore the Pulpit almost down, they have broken down many of the seats, and grosly abused the place; so that if the ficklers in this intrusion do not for shame, make up the charge, the Church-wardens accounts will manifest the damage redounding to the Parish, who can ill bear it.

Having thus presented you with those Reasons, which have inforced my conscience to a Re-entry on my own Right: Before I conclude this my Apology, I cannot but take notice of an Objection or two, which some do seem to urge, and with them make a great noise among the Vulgar.

1 It is objected Mr. *Sympson* was desired, and petitioned for to come to this Lecture at *Aldgate*, and thereby it doth appear some of the people do desire to injoy his Ministry, and those are men of quality and piety.

1 To this I answer, it hath not to mee appeared, for none have desired my consent to his Lecturing among us, neither is there any petition subscribed to bee found, and *non esse*, and *non apparere idem est*, I am not bound to believe there is any such Petition, or desire, till it bee produced.

2 Common fame hath indeed given out of ſome, that they have ſo deſired him, and thoſe which appear his greateſt Sticklers and Friends, are moſt of them deſperately prophane, and many of them at a deadly enmity to his Perſon, curſing him in their hearts, whilſt to advance oppoſition they bleſs him with their lips; I once offered (a man in no mean place) to compare for number, and quality, thoſe which are againſt him, with thoſe that are for him, and undertook to charge (if I had liberty) ſome of the greateſt of them with groſſeſt crimes; I am unwilling unleſs provoked, to diſcover their nakedneſs, which I could doe, but I commit them to the cenſure of all ſober men about us, who doe know them to be faſt friends to the prophane, beſt pleaders at a Taverne Barre, and Ale-houſe Bench; ſerious Payers of their ſhot in Veſtry counſels, loud Lyars to and concerning the poor, and clamorous Electors of their Miniſter, to the Office of collecting for the poor, and ſuch as know it, hath been ſaid of them they will ſwear themſelves to the loweſt place in Hell, but they will carry their deſign; in a word, they have cauſed all *London* to obſerve them to be a people of rudeneſs, and great incivillity, and the Pariſh to know them to be their perpetual diſturbers, acting more from pride and ambition than on any ſerious Principle, or purpoſe of doing good, & making their head-ſtrong will the reaſon of their actions, oppoſition to my Miniſtry being the only Principle of their deſire of Mr. *Sympſon*, who neither can, nor doth performe the work himſelf, but ſets up ſuch as ſend his owne followers in troops out of the Church, when they appear in the Pulpit, and I think I may ſay not many, if any of them are members of his ſeparated Society, or calling him Paſtor.

3 Muſt every Some enjoy their Lecturer they doe deſire, if ſo, then *Stepney* muſt enjoy Mr. *Johnſon*, who was choſen by the greateſt ſome, and with the conſent of the Incumbent, and is contended for on a Principle of long preſcription, and thoſe none of the baſeſt for either degree or quality; if ſo, then every hour in the Lords day muſt have a

different Lecturer, and Assembly, for in my Parish are some Arminians, Antinomians, Anabaptists, Seekers, Quakers, Ranters, Jews, what not; there wil bee little roome for the exercise of my Ministry, for *a quatenus ad omne valet consequentia*, are not all discontented Parties in publick Society confined by the consent of the Majority, especially where the best in every sence concurre? and is not the incumbents consent essential to Lecturing liberty? if not, why doe many Wills establishing standing Lectures, provide an allowance for the Incumbent, in consideration of his consent?

Obj. 2. *But Mr* Sympson *came in by order from the Lord Protector, and Councel, and in this act you will oppose his Order, and Power who put him in?*

To this I answer; Though an Order was used to this end, and the comments of insolency terrified my people, to provoke my recession from Right, yet I could never understand the Order to authorize this action; the Order was much concealed from me, and my Friends, I might but twice read it, and scarcely that, and could not have a Copy of it; but the sence of it (as I conceive) was only to make Mr. *Sympson* capable of Lecturing at *Aldgate* as formerly, always implying the choyse of the people, and consent of the present Incumbent; without which the Councel could not in right, and I beleeve would not order his Preaching; now from a capacity with this implyed condition, to conclude an authority to invade right, with furious threats, was an abuse of the Lord Protectors Power and Government, which I am confident he will not own; and therefore in defending my owne interest, I oppose not his Power or Order; which put Mr. *Sympson* only into a capacity of Lecturing.

2. If the Order did conferre any positive power of entring my Church, and there Lecturing without my consent; yet I oppose not the Lord Protectors power, in reassuming my right, for that his Highness hath repealed it, and made it voyd, having consented to governe according to Law, and not otherwise; and actually repealed all Statutes,

tutes, Ordinances, and Clauses that are any way against the just priviledges of Ministers, that agree in the publick profession of Faith; now, it is according to Law my just priviledge, that I preach *Statis horis*, in my owne Church, and at other hours I condescended, I hope I shall not bee blamed for shaking off the Chaines himself hath loosed.

Obj. 3. *But hereby you proclaime your self a man very rigid, that will hold no communion with any that differ in opinion from your self?*

I answer;

1 There are differences in opinion, that ought to divide communion, 2 *Joh.* 10. 11.

2 Is no communion to be had but by recession from right? Cannot I hold communion with a man unless contrary to my will and just priviledges, he command my Church? Is invasion an expression of Sanctity, and engagement to Communion? Is the defence of my Church against the intrusion of a known violent Anabaptist, an expression of Rigor? And is it not such in a Congregational Brother against a very moderate Presbyter?

3 Can I hold communion with none because not with him? *Aldgate* Parish knows that I can give liberty to men of different opinions from my self, being sober setled Ministers, and differing in Circumstances only; I have publickly profest so much of moderation, as to indulge Liberty to, and keep amity with men, maintaining Foundations of Faith, entity and unity of the Church, and differ only in the case of Discipline; but must retaine so much of zeal as to keep a distance from men that subvert foundations, and supplant the Churches of Christ.

These Reasons which have sensibly pressed my spirit, and perswaded my conscience (much contrary to the Dictates of self-interest, and counsel of timerous friends) to an indispensible duty; I present to the consideration of all, that if my act in entring on my owne interest seeme sudden, it may not seeme inconsiderate; for I cannot but think the due restitution of Gods Ordinances, deliverance of Souls

from the danger of back-sliding, defence of my right and just privilege, diversion of another from eating my Childrens bread, and the deliverance of my self and people from trouble and charge; being well weighed in an unprejudiced minde, will easily engage all to justifie my discharge of duty, to exert what power is in their hands according to Law, and just liberty, to defend, not discourage me; and convince serious Christians, that if any sufferings ensue on this Act by reason of it (which I confess I cannot fore-see, not daring to think but that there is more Justice than to suffer just re-entry to be oppressed) that I have therein ground of comfort; I profess it provoked me, with confidence to commit my self to God (whose the Conflict is in which I am engaged) in the doing this duty, waiting on him with a resolution to bid welcome the issue, be it what it will; well knowing the Lot is cast into the lap, but the issues thereof is from the Lord.

FINIS.